



Workplace Safety &
Insurance Board

Commission de la sécurité
professionnelle et de l'assurance
contre les accidents du travail



The Ontario Occupational Cancer Research and Surveillance Program:

**A New Initiative of Cancer Care Ontario &
Ontario Workplace Safety & Insurance Board**

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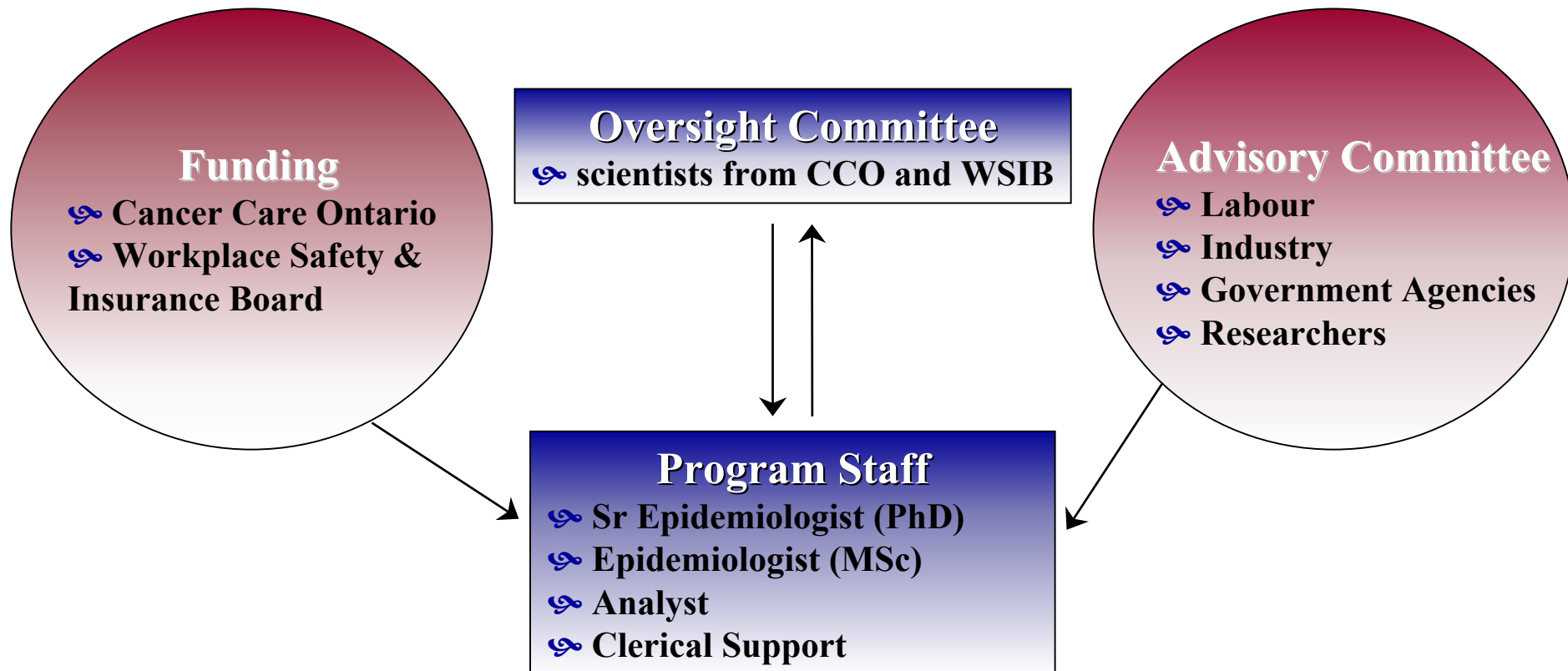
A Peters and CM Fortin, WSIB

Surveillance Program Objective

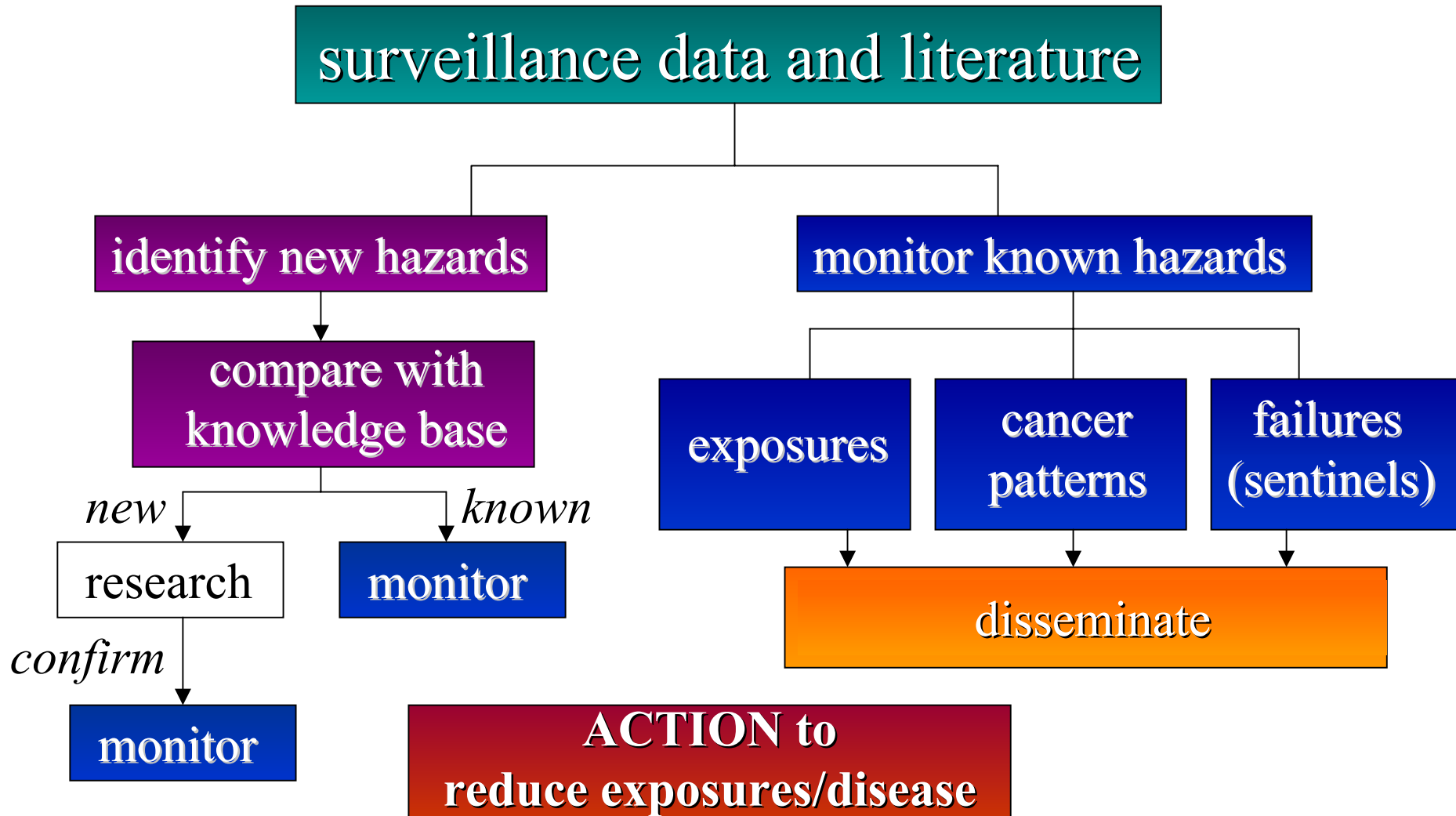
Design and implement new surveillance systems for occupational cancers and carcinogens in Ontario:

- ∞ identify new workplace-cancer associations**
- ∞ monitor known workplace-cancer associations (exposures; cancer patterns; failures)**
- ∞ estimate size & determinants of workplace cancers**

Proposed Structure & Human Resources



Surveillance System Structure



Program site: Ontario, Canada



∞ 300,000 businesses

∞ 90% with <50 employees

∞ many industries with known exposures of concern:

∞ metal mining and refining

∞ nuclear power

∞ agriculture and forestry (incl. pulp and paper)

∞ auto, steel and other heavy industries

∞ chemical industries (petrochemical, etc.)

Program Partners: Missions

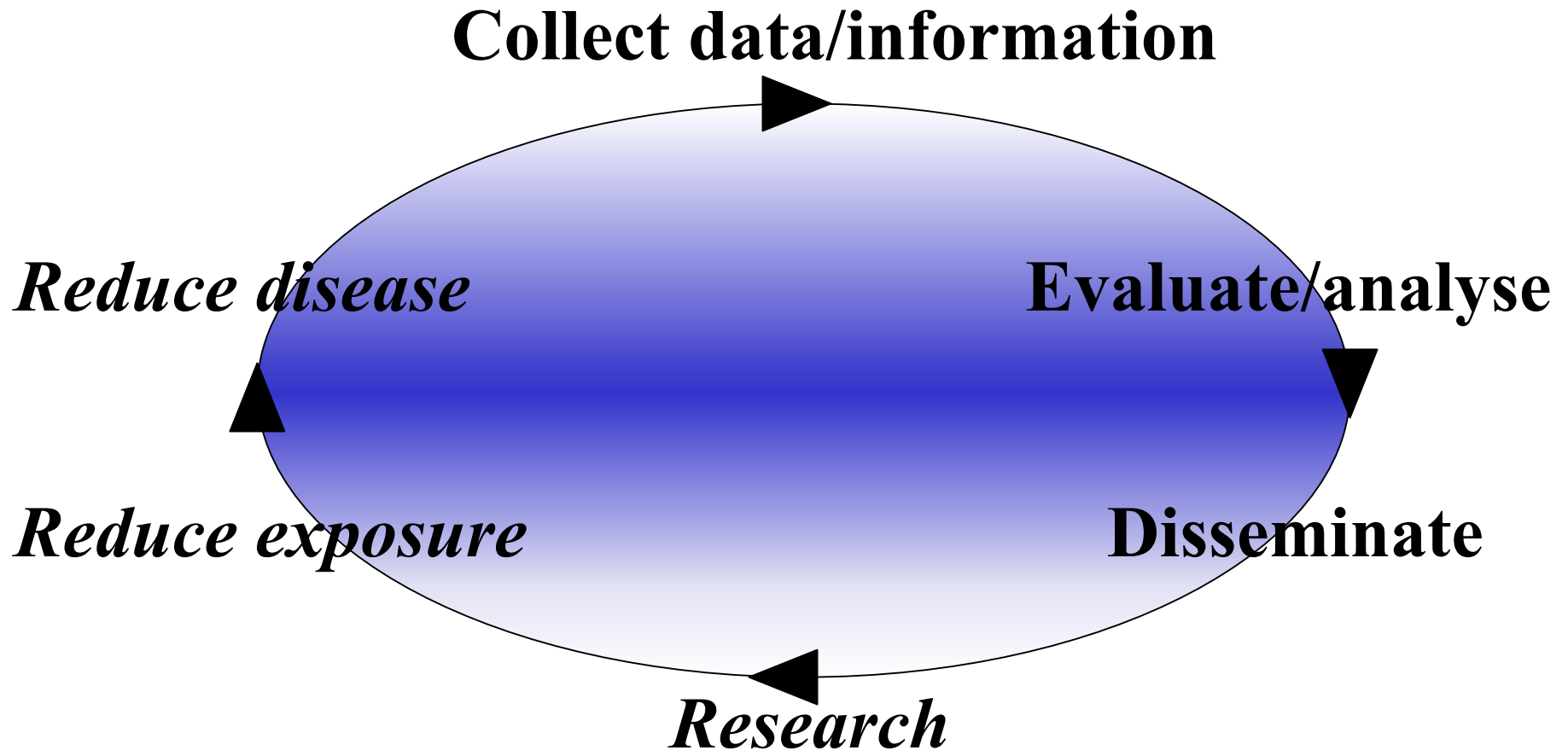
Cancer Care Ontario is Ontario's cancer agency:

to reduce the burden of cancer through ensuring equitable access to programs for prevention, care, education and research

Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board is Ontario's worker compensation board:

to promote health and safety in workplaces and to prevent and reduce the occurrence of occupational diseases

Surveillance, Research and Prevention Loop



Examples

1. Collect data/information

- ∞ literature scans for new associations
- ∞ occupational histories on cancer patients
- ∞ new cohorts
- ∞ exposure data (JEMs, surveys, etc.)
- ∞ “failures” (people with sentinel cancers)

2. Evaluate/analyse

- ∞ literature synthesis for Ontario**
- ∞ cancer trends and patterns (selected cancers)**
- ∞ coding of existing occupation data**
- ∞ linkage of cancer and occupation databases**
- ∞ exposure assessment**
- ∞ analysis of existing cohort, etc. data**
- ∞ risk assessment**

3. Disseminate

∞ education

∞ risk communication

∞ publications

∞ training

∞ technical assistance

Potential Data Sources

1. Cancer

Ontario Cancer Registry (OCR)

- ∞ Ontario-wide
- ∞ 50,000 cancers/year
- ∞ since 1964
- ∞ no occupation data

Ontario death certificates

- ∞ Ontario-wide
- ∞ 21,000 cancer deaths/year
- ∞ since 1950
- ∞ “usual” occupation not coded

2. Occupation

10% labour force sample

- ∞ c. 200,000 Ontarions
- ∞ employment 1965-71
- ∞ linked with mortality

Population censuses

- ∞ quinquennial (1986,-91, etc)
- ∞ 20% of households
- ∞ current occ/industry
- ∞ access issues

Specific cohort files, e.g.

- ∞ mining master file
- ∞ National Dose Register
- ∞ farm families

Income tax files

- ∞ file rate of filing
- ∞ ? quality of occ
- ∞ access issues

Conclusions

**This occupation-cancer surveillance program
is novel:**

- ∞ a partnership between provincial cancer and workplace safety agencies**
- ∞ both have provincial mandates**
- ∞ similar missions within their domains**

It therefore has real potential to contribute to:

- ∞ better estimates of workplace cancers and their causes**
- ∞ reductions in workplace hazards and disease**
- ∞ increased knowledge of hazards for workers, employers, compensation officials**
- ∞ a more fair and comprehensive compensation system for workplace cancers**